

041307Z Jun 01

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	EVG-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00
	INL-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOYE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	DCP-01	NSAE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9019
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY
PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS
NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/04/11

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SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE WAR VETERANS LEADER HUNZVI IS DEAD

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CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL M. IRVING FOR
REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) ACCORDING TO SEVERAL INDEPENDENT AND RELIABLE SOURCES, ZIMBABWE NATIONAL LIBERATION WAR VETERANS' ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN AND ZANU-PF MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT CHENJERAI "HITLER" HUNZVI DIED IN HOSPITAL ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 3. AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON OFFICIAL BROADCAST MEDIA EARLY ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 4 CONFIRMED HIS DEATH. HUNZVI HAD BEEN READMITTED TO A HARARE HOSPITAL LATE LAST WEEK SHORTLY AFTER BEING RELEASED FROM A BULAWAYO HOSPITAL (REFTEL). HOSPITAL SOURCES CONTINUED TO TELL THE INDEPENDENT "DAILY NEWS" LATE ON JUNE 3 THAT HUNZVI WAS STILL ON LIFE SUPPORT. ALTHOUGH PRESS REPORTS SPECULATED THAT HUNZVI WAS ILL WITH CEREBRAL MALARIA, IT HAD BEEN AN OPEN SECRET THAT HE LONG SUFFERED FROM HIV/AIDS.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: WITH A 24-HOUR DELAY IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS DEATH, GOZ OFFICIALS APPEARED TO BE TRYING TO BUY TIME IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH THE RAMIFICATIONS OF HUNZVI'S PASSING. THE GOZ LIKELY WANTED TO WAIT FOR PRESIDENT MUGABE TO RETURN FROM ASIA ON JUNE 3 BEFORE MAKING THE ANNOUNCEMENT. SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT EMMERSON MNANGAGWA CANCELLED WITH LITTLE PRIOR NOTICE A JUNE 4 MEETING WITH CHARGE. WE SUSPECT THAT HE AND OTHER ZANU-PF POLITBURO MEMBERS ARE HUDDLED TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF HUNZVI'S DEATH ON THE RULING PARTY'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND TO COME UP WITH A

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SUCCESSOR FOR THE GOZ'S CHIEF TERRORIZER.

¶3. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: HUNZVI'S DEPARTURE FROM THE SCENE IS NOT LIKELY TO END THE BITTER DIVISIONS THAT HAVE WRACKED THE WAR VETERANS' ASSOCIATION. ZANU-PF'S RISING STAR AND HARARE WAR VETERANS LEADER JOSEPH CHINOTIMBA WILL EVENTUALLY COME INTO CONFLICT WITH HUNZVI'S OLD RIVAL ENDY MHLANGA, THE ASSOCIATION'S SECRETARY-GENERAL. ALTHOUGH MUGABE HAS DONE LITTLE IN

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THE PAST TO CURB THE ASSOCIATION'S INTERNAL STRIFE AS A WAY TO KEEP HUNZVI IN CHECK, HE WILL WANT TO MINIMIZE RIVALRIES NOW TO ENSURE THAT THE WAR VETERANS DO NOT LOSE THEIR WAY AND CEASE TO FUNCTION AS THE RULING PARTY'S SHOCK TROOPS. MUGABE WILL WANT TO REASSURE HUNZVI'S ERSTWHILE PROTEGES THAT THEY WILL BE WELL LOOKED AFTER AND THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PRESIDENT'S RE-ELECTION STRATEGY.

THE LAST THING MUGABE WANTS TO SEE NOW IS SO-CALLED WAR VETERANS MELTING AWAY FROM THE OCCUPIED FARMS. END COMMENT.

IRVING

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